

POWERLINES

DECEMBER 2011 MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Summer Microburst Causes Excessive Damage to KEC Lines



On the evening of August 28 a microburst hit south of Coeur d'Alene near KEC's Setters Substation. A microburst or localized tornado is a convective downdraft which may induce dangerous horizontal/vertical wind shears, and can cause serious property damage. In this case the microburst/localized tornado caused significant damage to KEC's system when approximately 20 KEC power poles along 1.3 miles of Setters Road were shattered (see pictures).

Many members were affected by the power outages caused by the downed poles and lines. At the height of the outage, about 600 members were without power. Our crews worked through the night and into the next day restoring power to members using temporary measures.

Now, more than three months later KEC crews continue to repair the extensive damage caused by this microburst.

"Repairs are approximately 50 percent completed and we hope to have the rest finished by the end of the year," according to KEC's Operations Manager Greg Hansen.



The original double-circuit overhead line that was damaged has been replaced with a single-circuit overhead line and the remaining circuit is being relocated underground. This will improve reliability while accommodating the same load carrying capabilities as the former line. The damaged poles and wires were less than ten years old and deliver power from the Setters Substation to approximately 2,000 KEC members.

The microburst, or any large storm which causes damage to our lines, has a financial impact on the Cooperative and our members. Although unexpected damages like these are costly, our priority continues to be to deliver safe and reliable power to you, our members at competitive prices.

Story and Photos by Melissa Newcomer

KEC Holiday Office Hours

KEC will be closed on Monday, Dec. 26 for Christmas and Monday, Jan. 2 for the New Year.

Our normal office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. [1813887]

Members can always pay a bill 24 hours a day at www.kec.com or by phone by calling 1.877.999.3371.

Seeking KEC Members for Social Media Opinion Committee

Are you a social media user? If so we'd like your help! KEC continues to expand our communication with members using social media and the web. We would like to hear from our members using social media on how we can improve. We're creating a Member Opinion Committee to help us make social media best serve our membership. The committee will meet face to face and then move to an online forum. If you are interested contact Erika Neff at 208.292.3270 or eneff@kec.com for more information.

General Manager's Message: Cooperatives Are the Fabric of Our Community



In 1752, Benjamin Franklin started an organization called the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire. It was the first organization to be formed and operated as a cooperative. Its member-focused cooperative heritage has allowed it to remain a venerable business for nearly 260 years! [1235647]

Today, nearly 29,000 cooperatives operate domestically within the United States. These cooperatives significantly contribute to our nation's economic vitality and diversity. For instance, dairy cooperatives produce nearly 90 percent of our nation's milk. Credit unions provide cooperative-based financial services to over 91 million Americans. And let us not forget the role that electric cooperatives play within our nation. Electric cooperatives were first formed in the 1930s to provide electric power to rural communities that did not have access to central station power. Today, over 42 million Americans receive their power from an electric cooperative and these electric cooperatives provide service to over 75 percent of our country's landmass. Kootenai Electric Cooperative is proud to be part of this rich heritage.

What makes a cooperative special? Our collective adherence to seven simple principles that guide and govern everything we do. These Seven Cooperative Principles are as follows:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

In a nut shell, cooperatives are created by and operate for the benefit of those they serve. Recognizing the many contributions that cooperatives make to the quality of life of those they serve, 2012 has been designated the International Year of the Cooperative. At KEC, we are honored that this event happens to mark our 74th anniversary of providing service to you.



Doug Elliott
KEC General Manager

Nominating Committee Seeks Board of Director Candidates

The KEC Nominating Committee is looking for members interested in serving on our Board of Directors. Candidates must meet the qualifications outlined in the Cooperative's bylaws, be able to invest a minimum of 40 days per year on board-related activities and be able to periodically attend conferences and director training conducted within the Northwest. Directors should also have strong business acumen and a broad understanding of regional and national energy issues. In April 2012, there will be three positions up for election:

District 2 currently served by Donna Boekel

The part of the system south of Highway 53, and north of the Spokane River to the west of Lake Coeur d'Alene and I-90 to the east of Lake Coeur d'Alene.

District 4 currently served by Bill Swick

The part of the system south of Setters and west of Lake Coeur d'Alene.

District At-Large, currently served by Terry LaLiberte

One position representing the entire service territory.

If you or someone you know would like to be considered, please contact Erika Neff at eneff@kec.com or 208.292.3270.



KEC Bylaws Available Online

KEC is governed by a set of rules called bylaws. These bylaws outline how we conduct business. Some of these bylaws also outline our relationship with you, our members.

Changes and revisions, if any, are presented to the membership and approved at the Annual Meeting each year. A copy of the complete text of the current bylaws and articles of incorporation are available on our website at www.kec.com or call our office at 208.765.1200 and we will mail a copy to you.

WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Four KEC account numbers are hidden in this newsletter. If one of these numbers is yours, contact us at 208.765.1200 and receive a \$50 credit on your bill!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Members are welcome to attend KEC's monthly Board of Directors meeting. Meeting dates vary each month. Call Terry Brown at 208.292.3211 to learn more.



Check out our Facebook Page!

Become a fan by clicking "like" at www.facebook.com/KootenaiElectric.



We will provide updates on new programs and services, member discount offers, energy efficiency tips and rebates, power outage information and more.

Scan barcode to view our page!

The QR code to the right can be scanned by a smartphone to instantly connect to our Facebook page. Open the scanner application on your mobile device to scan the code above. If you don't have a scanner app, choose one from your phone's app store. It's that simple!



CALL 1.877.744.1055 TO REPORT A POWER OUTAGE

Don't forget, calling KEC's dedicated outage line is the fastest way to report a power outage. To make this system most effective, we always need to have your most current phone number on file. This way, when you call to report an outage, our system recognizes your number (using caller id) and your meter shows up right away on our outage map. This gets crews to your area as quickly as possible. As a reminder, please do not call our business line as there are limited phone lines and representatives to answer your call. In large outages, our goal is to restore power to the largest number of people first. Please be sure to report any downed power lines right away.

Scholarship Applications Now Available

Ten \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded by the Kootenai Electric Trust to KEC members or their children who are either seniors in high school or currently enrolled in college or an accredited training institution for the fall of 2012. The scholarships will be awarded based on need and academic achievement. [1389760]

Applications will be considered and winners selected by members of the Kootenai Electric Trust Board of Directors which disburses Operation Round Up® funds contributed by KEC members.

Applications are available at www.kec.com, in the KEC office or by calling 208.292.3270.

Now Available: Choose Your Due Date

As part of our Member's Choice Program, KEC now offers our members the choice of their due date. Members have the option to choose from three due dates of the 5th, 15th or 25th of each month.

If you would like to learn more or discuss changing your due date, please call our office at 208.765.1200. *Changing the due date may result in a significant change (increase or decrease) in the number of days billed on your first bill after the change occurs.*

Our Member's Choice Program was created to ensure we offer our members more choices when it comes to their electric usage and their bill. Some of the other Member's Choice options include:

- eBill + Paperless Billing
- Budget Billing
- Auto Withdrawal
- Pay Online at www.kec.com
- Pay by Phone - 1.877.999.3371
- Pay at Money Gram Locations
- Send Payment via USPS



If you have any questions regarding this program, please call us at 208.765.1200 and ask to speak to any member service representative.

No More P.O. Box

KEC recently updated our mailing processes which included the elimination of our P.O. Box. Our updated contact information is listed below.

Physical and Mailing Address:

Kootenai Electric Cooperative
2451 W. Dakota Ave.
Hayden, ID 83835

Call Us:

208.765.1200

Email Us:

kec@kec.com

Visit Us Online:

www.kec.com



The QR code to the right can be scanned by a smartphone to instantly connect to our web site.

Open the scanner application on your mobile device to scan the code above. If you don't have a scanner app, choose one from your phone's app store. It's that simple! [1235514]

Account Fee Changes Effective Feb. 2012

On February 1, 2012 KEC will implement changes to our account fee and charges policy. The fees and charges policy is in place to recover costs which are not included in the rate base. This means these costs are not attributed to all members and assists in maintaining lower rates. An example of changes to our account fees and charges include:

| Existing | Account Fees and Charges | February 1, 2012 |
|----------|--|--|
| \$20.00 | NSF Check | \$25.00 |
| 1% | Past Due Account | Greater of 2% of a past due amount per month Or A \$5.00 minimum past due charge per month |
| None | Automated Phone Disconnection Notification | \$5.00 |
| \$25.00 | Daytime reconnection for non-payment | \$100.00 |
| \$125.00 | After hours reconnection for non-payment | \$300.00 |

While over 90% of our members will not be affected by this implementation, we want to provide plenty of notice to any member who might be affected by this change. With this advanced notice members should have sufficient time so they are not impacted by this change. A full listing of KEC account fees and charges can be found on our website at www.kec.com. If you have any questions, please give us a call at 208.765.1200.